

Appn No. 10/622,198
Amdt date November 14, 2005
Reply to Office action of October 6, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) The hinge assembly of ~~claim 1~~ claim 5, wherein the rear end of the slide bracket is moved in an upward direction as the slide bracket is slidably extended from the mounting bracket.
3. (Previously Presented) A hinge assembly for coupling a spa cover to a spa, comprising:
 - a mounting bracket adapted to be installed near a top of the spa;
 - a slide bracket slidably coupled to the mounting bracket; and
 - a support arm adapted to be attached to the spa cover,
 - wherein the support arm is pivotably coupled to the slide bracket at a pivot point on the slide bracket, and
 - wherein the support arm comprises:
 - an elongated member adapted to be attached along a side of the spa cover;
 - a short member, which is pivotably coupled to the slide bracket; and
 - a connecting member between the elongated member and the short member, said connecting member having a curvature such that the short member is substantially perpendicular to the elongated member.
4. (Canceled)

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5. (Currently Amended) ~~The hinge assembly of claim 4,~~

A hinge assembly for coupling a spa cover to a spa, comprising:

a mounting bracket adapted to be installed near a top of the spa;

a slide bracket slidably coupled to the mounting bracket, the slide bracket having a front end and a rear end; and

a support arm adapted to be fixedly attached to the spa cover, wherein the support arm is pivotably coupled to the slide bracket at a pivot point near the rear end of the slide bracket,

wherein the slide bracket is adapted to slide with respect to the mounting bracket independently of a pivotal movement of the support arm about the pivot point on the slide bracket,

wherein the mounting bracket comprises two side plates connected via a web, wherein at least one of the side plates has formed thereon at least one hole used to slidably couple the slide bracket to the mounting bracket, and

wherein the slide bracket comprises two slide plates connected via another web, wherein at least one of the slide plates has formed thereon an elongated opening coupled to said at least one hole via a pin to slidably couple the slide bracket to the mounting bracket, wherein the elongated opening is inclined with a first vertical level of the opening close to the pivot point being higher than a second vertical level of the opening away from the pivot point, thereby enabling the end near the pivot point to be moved in the upward direction as the slide bracket is slidably extended from the mounting bracket.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

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8. (Currently Amended) ~~The spa system of claim 7,~~

A spa system comprising:

a spa;

a foldable spa cover having at least two sections;

a hinge assembly for coupling the spa cover to the spa, said hinge assembly comprising:

a mounting bracket installed near a top of the spa;

a slide bracket slidably coupled to the mounting bracket, the slide bracket having a front end and a rear end; and

a support arm fixedly attached to the spa cover, wherein the support arm is pivotably coupled to the slide bracket at a pivot point near the rear end of the slide bracket,

wherein the slide bracket is adapted to slide with respect to the mounting bracket independently of a pivotal movement of the support arm about the pivot point on the slide bracket, such that the spa cover is adapted to slide rearward first and then rotated when the support arm is rotated about the pivot point.

wherein the mounting bracket comprises two side plates connected via a web, wherein at least one of the side plates has formed thereon at least one hole used to slidably couple the slide bracket to the mounting bracket, and

wherein the slide bracket comprises two slide plates connected via another web, wherein at least one of the slide plates has formed thereon an elongated opening coupled to said at least one hole via a pin to slidably couple the slide bracket to the mounting bracket, wherein the elongated opening is inclined with a first vertical level of the opening close to the pivot point being higher than a second vertical level of the opening away from the pivot point, thereby enabling the rear end to be moved in an upward direction as the slide bracket is slidably extended from the mounting bracket.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~The spa system of claim 6~~ claim 8, wherein the support arm is attached to the spa cover via a metal plate disposed on an outside surface of the spa cover.

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10. (Original) The spa system of claim 9, wherein the metal plate is affixed to the spa cover via a double sided tape.

11. (Original) The spa system of claim 10, wherein the metal plate has a hole formed thereon, wherein a screw is inserted through the hole into the spa cover, and wherein the screw is anchored in the spa cover by rotating the screw.

12. (Original) The spa system of claim 11, further comprising a deformable anchor engaged with the screw, and wherein the deformable anchor is deformed and embedded inside the spa cover as the screw is rotated.

Claims 13-21. (Canceled)